

The Library Assistant:

The Official Organ of the Library Assistants' Association.

No. 125.

MAY, 1908.

Published Monthly

ANNOUNCEMENTS.

MAY MEETING.

The next meeting of the Association will be held at the **Twickenham Public Library** (by kind invitation) on **Wednesday, May 13th**. The following are the arrangements:—

6.30 p.m. Tea, kindly provided by the Public Libraries Committee.

7.30 Paper by **Mr. J. Frederick Hogg**, *Sub-Librarian, Battersea*, on "The Central Control of Libraries and its Advantages."

This will be the first visit of the Association to Twickenham. Given fine weather this pretty riverside resort should be looking at its best, and as the subject to be discussed at the meeting, the central control of libraries, is of special interest to London assistants, it is hoped that the dual attraction will result in a large attendance.

At the meeting two members will be elected to audit the accounts of the Association for the year 1907-8. Nominations to be sent to the Hon. Secretary, or handed to him before the commencement of the proceedings.

Routes: By train from Waterloo. North London Railway to Richmond, thence by train or tram. By tram from Shepherd's Bush and Hammersmith to the tramway junction, Twickenham. Cyclists can have their machines stored at the Library.

SOCIAL EVENING.

The Social at **St. Bride Institute** on **Wednesday evening, May 27th**, promises to be more successful than any similar function yet held in connection with the Association. There is a good demand for tickets and a thoroughly enjoyable evening is assured. The programme is an extremely varied one: there will be dancing for those who care for it; a high-class musical programme; a humorous sketch by lady members of the Islington Libraries Club which, at a recent performance, had a flattering reception; and other attractions, so that all will be catered for and none need be afraid of spending a dull evening.

The proceedings will commence at 7 p.m., and the tickets are 1s. 6d. each, including all refreshments. Morning dress will be worn.

Members are urged to contribute to the success of the gathering by coming themselves and bringing their friends. The evening should provide agreeable relaxation for those who are sitting for the L.A. Examination.

Tickets may be obtained through members of the Committee or from **Mr. James D. Stewart, Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, N.**

THE WELSH ASSISTANTS' OUTLOOK.*

By CHARLES SEXTON, *Central Public Library, Cardiff.*

The library movement in Wales is still in its infancy. It is true that the chief city and several of the larger towns have excellent library systems; but, in the thickly-populated valleys of South Wales, and also in the rural districts, little provision has been made for effective library service, and it is perhaps these districts that need public libraries the most. In many parts of the Principality, too, we meet with that anomaly—the adoption of the Acts but the non-application of them. It seems rather a reflection on Wales that the industrial districts such as have been mentioned should be unprovided with public libraries. A little pressure judiciously applied by those interested in library work might give new vigour to these somewhat lax local authorities.

In the collegiate towns libraries have been established in connection with the colleges, but these libraries, built up as they are for the use of students, have not the interest that attaches to institutions established for the whole community. The National Library which will have for its foundation one of these college libraries, is at present an unknown quantity in library affairs, and it will be time to enlarge upon it when it arises out of the obscurity that now covers everything connected with it.

The building of Carnegie libraries in the valleys has made us familiar with the bookless library. Through lack of professional advice these buildings have apparently been erected on the principle that bricks are more important than books, as the supply of the latter is usually miserably inadequate, consisting as a rule of a miscellaneous collection of cheaply-purchased and donated volumes and a few local directories. Books are issued in many of them only during the evening, and as very little use is made of the institutions by the inhabitants of the district they serve, the persons appointed to look after them are not overburdened in compiling tables of issues and statistics. This somewhat dismal picture is due to lack of proper advice; or, in other words, the absence of trained librarians and assistants.

The only widespread effort that has been made to provide literary and recreative institutions in the valleys has taken the form of workmen's institutes. These are usually attached to large works or collieries, and have been built in some cases by a grant from Mr. Carnegie, and in others by some local magnate. They are supported by a weekly contribution from each work-

*Read at the Inaugural Meeting of the South Wales Branch of the L.A.A. at Cardiff on March 8th.

man. In many of these institutes there are what are termed reading rooms and libraries, but these often exist in name only. The persons appointed to look after such institutions bid fair in the performance of their duties to eclipse Dryden's Buckingham, oftentimes playing the rôles of caretaker, librarian, window-cleaner, and billiard-marker. No doubt these institutions do good in their way, but from a literary and educational standpoint they can only be considered dismal failures. As an instance of how this kind of place will degenerate, a recent court case disclosed the fact that the book-shelves of one of them were used to store beer bottles. Another instance of this kind recently came to light. One of the billiard tables of a large workmen's institute in the valleys was in need of repair, and funds being short, the small collection of books was sold to defray the cost of repairing the billiard table! Assistants and others who have the library movement at heart should stir up the local authorities to replace these institutions by the more efficient and satisfactory public library.

Welsh assistants are unfavourably placed with regard to educational facilities. Some years ago Mr. Ballinger gave lectures to the library staff at Cardiff, but these were discontinued through pressure of business. At present the only means of obtaining anything in this way are Correspondence Classes, and the aid given in this way is necessarily very slight.

In October of last year a circular was addressed to the principal library authorities by the Education Committee of the Library Association with regard to the question of educational facilities. One of the suggestions made in this circular was that arrangements might be made with the local university, or other educational authority, for the holding of lectures upon library science and literary history. This is already being done at the School of Economics, London, at Leeds, Newcastle, and elsewhere. Another suggestion had reference to the Summer School to be held in London this year. The Education Committee asked that as many students as could be spared from each library be allowed time to attend, and that, if possible, some contribution be made towards their expenses. Many assistants are waiting anxiously to see what action will be taken as a result of this circular.

A branch of the Library Assistants' Association may be made valuable to the assistants from the educational point of view. By forming study circles the class work for the Library Association Examinations can be systematically prepared, and the reading and discussion of papers will be most helpful.

Hitherto Welsh assistants have sought professional advancement outside Wales. This is natural and will to a certain extent

always be so. Many assistants from the Cardiff Public Libraries have secured appointments outside Wales, but trained assistants should be able to find such appointments within Wales. The replacing of the effete and inefficient institutions by efficient public libraries would open up a new field for trained assistants, and with the formation of a Branch of the L.A.A., with study circles and other educational facilities, we trust that assistants will not only advance in educational and professional knowledge, but that there may be an ever-growing field for their services.

In this survey, which has necessarily been brief, I have touched upon the more important features of library work in Wales. I will conclude by commending to all assistants in South Wales, the Branch of the Library Assistants' Association. There is every prospect of good work being done by the Branch, both from the educational and the social point of view. Assistants should take a keen interest in it from the beginning and thus assure its success.

LEARNING TO CATALOGUE.*

By OLIVE E. CLARKE, *Associate of Arts, Oxford; Islington Public Libraries.*

The compilation of a catalogue is one of the most important branches of a librarian's work: it therefore behoves every member of the library profession to make cataloguing one of the most important branches of their studies. The aim of this paper is to give a rough sketch of a would-be cataloguer's plan of education.

It has been said—and the same statement has been made with regard to workers of almost all distinctions under the sun—that cataloguers are born, not made. Such a statement is disheartening and misleading, for, although it may be granted that certain qualities, such as an average amount of brain-power, are required by those ambitious of becoming first-rate cataloguers, yet I maintain that it would be nearer the truth to assert that cataloguers are made, not born. Here a platitude is to be inflicted upon you—perfection can never be reached nor any approach made towards it save by the worker, the man or woman who is willing to reach the goal by steady, conscientious and hard work—there never was nor ever will be any other road to success.

The first step the student of cataloguing should take should be to ascertain the meaning of the word "catalogue," and the reasons for its existence. I have not been able to discover

*Read at the April Meeting of the Library Assistants' Association.

a satisfactory definition of the word in any professional literature, which fact is rather remarkable: the much-talked-of Anglo-American code defines it in the following elucidating sentences: "A list of books. As distinguished from a bibliography it is a list of books in some library or collection." It has been left to an outsider to supply this need. From Murray's dictionary the enquirer learns that "catalogue" is derived through the French "catalogue" from the Latin "catalogus," which was borrowed from the Greek. At first the word signified "to choose, pick out, enrol, reckon in a list," and it came to be used in the sense of a register or list. In the course of time, however, the meaning has become narrowed to "a list distinguished by systematic or methodical arrangement, alphabetical or other order, and often by the addition of brief particulars, descriptive or aiding identification, indicative of locality, position, date, price and the like."

The chief aim of the cataloguer must be to compile a catalogue which shall be a complete index of the books in the library, rendering them as accessible as possible to every class of reader. The ideal catalogue should be so compiled that readers may be assisted to borrow books they will really appreciate, and that students may be helped to make a wise and useful choice. Emerson says, "In a library we are surrounded by many hundreds of dear friends but they are imprisoned by an enchanter in these paper and leathern boxes; and, though they know us, and have been waiting two, ten, or twenty centuries for us—some of them—and are eager to give us a sign and unbosom themselves, it is the law of their limbs that they must not speak until spoken to; and as the enchanter has dressed them, like battalions of infantry, in coat and jacket of one cut, by the thousand and ten thousand, your chance of hitting on the right one is to be computed by the arithmetical rule of Permutation and Combination—not a choice out of three caskets, but out of half a million caskets all alike." The need suggested by this excerpt should be met by the judicious use of annotated entries indicating the scope, objects and special features of the books, both fictional and non-fictional.

Whenever there is any good work to be done in the world one is sure to find there are a multiplicity of ways in which that work may be undertaken, together with rules which other people lay down for the guidance of the workers. Cataloguing is no exception to this rule, for the methods which are advocated and the codes of rules which have been drawn up are as sand upon the sea-shore, and each one is zealously upheld against the others by the partisans of its compilers. It is a marvel that cataloguers are not too overwhelmed by the number of ways

in which the work might be done to attempt to do it! Yet this multiplicity of modes and codes is a matter for congratulation, as it shows that librarianship has not reached a state of utter stagnation, but that librarians are still striving to accomplish the maximum of work in their libraries in the most efficient way.

The code to be studied by the junior should be that in use in the library where he is employed. This is a most important point, though it is frequently overlooked by the junior who thirsts for deathless fame which he thinks to gain by ignoring the practical code and pursuing the theoretical one which presents the most difficulties. It does not matter how perfect other codes may be; for the novice the code worked upon at his particular library should be the only code in existence until he has thoroughly mastered it. If this one code is learned perfectly he will never forget it nor confuse it with other codes; he will be better able to study those others, for the points of dissimilarity will prove the links which bind strange codes to his memory. Besides, there is a personal advantage in the ability to apply this code, for his chief does not care a brass farthing about the acquaintance his assistants have with the ins and outs say, of the British Museum rules, if they are unable to apply Cutter's rules which he favours.

These facts are recognised at Islington, consequently the assistants are thoroughly coached in the methods in use, and have experience in their practical application before they attempt to gain a more extensive knowledge of cataloguing. The first experience of cataloguing work which an assistant there has, is the writing of the stock-slips, which are simply transcripts of the title-page or rough catalogue slips. The code of rules is thoroughly explained to the assistant, and specimen slips are written for her guidance. She is then given a batch of ordinary novels, as these are the simplest and teach her how to transcribe the author and title and initiate her into the fundamental rules of punctuation. After a time she is drafted on to writing slips for the non-fictional works. She then works with a statement of the particulars which must be included in the bibliographical description before her. One of the seniors examines these slips, armed with a blue pencil, and corrects any errors which have been made, explaining such corrections to the assistant. After some experience with the rough catalogue slips, assistants are initiated into the mysteries of the sheaf catalogues for author and title; its objects are explained, and in the course of time they learn by bitter experience how to compress judiciously the information given on title-pages, the requisite number of entries for each work, and also how to

make good use of the various tools of the cataloguer. It may be remarked that many librarians are to blame for the lamentable lack of practical experience amongst their assistants: they entirely overlook the fact that anyone with an average share of intelligence can transcribe a title-page, and would think it rank heresy to allow their junior assistant to assist even in the preparatory work of cataloguing; they shroud the various processes in a fearsome kind of mystery and do work themselves, or give their highly-paid assistants work to do which could be done by a lower paid junior. Moreover, if juniors help in the work of cataloguing it tends to make them more valuable as assistants, both to the librarian and the readers.

After a preliminary knowledge of the subject has been acquired by a course of training similar to that outlined above, assistants should enrol themselves as students in the Cataloguing Classes of the Library Association, held at the London School of Economics. These Classes are invaluable to those who desire to obtain a fuller knowledge of this branch of librarianship, but to those who desire to win sudden glory by madly working in these Classes before they have obtained any preliminary practical knowledge a warning must be given: the Classes are not suitable for assistants absolutely ignorant of the rudiments of cataloguing, for they assume that the student knows something about the work, and if he does not, unless he is a heaven-born genius, he will find himself in a veritable slough of difficulties. As I have said, however, the Classes are invaluable under certain conditions, for students become acquainted with the underlying principles of cataloguing and are introduced to the most important codes of rules. At the present time these are:—

- Cutter (C.A.), Rules for a dictionary catalogue;
- Linderfeldt (K. A.), Eclectic card catalogue rules;
- Jast (L. S.), Classified and annotated cataloguing, suggestions and rules;
- Brown (J. W.), Rules for the compilation of catalogues and bibliographies (contained in the "Manual of Practical Bibliography");
- Sayers (W. C. B. and J. D. Stewart), Catalogues for children; The Anglo-American code, and
- Stewart (J. D.), The sheaf catalogue.

The following codes may be studied, more particularly from the historical standpoint, as they serve to denote the advance made within recent years in cataloguing codes:—

The cataloguing rules of the British Museum;

Compendious cataloguing rules for the author-catalogue of the Bodleian Library;

The Library Association rules, and the American Library Association condensed rules for an author and title catalogue.

The knowledge acquired at the Classes must necessarily be superficial, or rather elementary, for it is impossible to learn all there is to be learned concerning any part of cataloguing in twelve lectures. But the student obtains the necessary guidance at the most critical point in his studies, namely, when the foundations are being laid. It is generally presumed that the superstructure will be carried to a satisfactory completion when the foundations have been well and carefully laid.

One or two points are worthy of notice before the Classes are finally dismissed. Many students seem to consider it derogatory to their dignity to work the exercises set by the lecturer: such an attitude is absolutely ridiculous, for it is an undoubted fact that the student who conscientiously works such exercises is materially helped because he is forced to put his knowledge into definite shape. It is hopeless for anyone to anticipate any good result from attending the lectures if they are imbued with the idea that they know as much, if not more, than the lecturer, because without confidence in him it is difficult to derive any benefit from his lectures. The lectures at the School of Economics not only serve to impart the elements of the knowledge of cataloguing but they also open up a wide vista of possibilities for further study to the earnest student. He will not be satisfied save with a systematic and thorough research into every branch of the subject; he will study the various codes and methods with their applications one by one to discover their *raison d'être*, and he will not rest content until he has reached the very heart of each and has, to a certain extent, been able to follow the workings of the compiler's mind. He will compare these codes, noting the points in which one is superior to the other; he will familiarise himself with the works which bear upon his study; and last, but certainly not least, will he study the literature which has to be catalogued.

There is a large literature upon cataloguing scattered throughout the various professional periodicals: in addition to these students will find the following selection of books helpful and suggestive in their studies:—

Brown (J. D.), Manual of practical bibliography.

Dewey (Melvil), Library school rules.

Hitchler (Theresa), Comparative cataloguing rules: twenty points in ten codes briefly compared.

Linderfeldt (K. A.), Eclectic card catalogue rules.
 Quinn (J. H.), Manual of cataloguing.
 Savage (E. A.), Manual of descriptive annotation.
 Wheatley (H. B.), How to catalogue a library.

APRIL MEETING.

The monthly meeting of the Association was held at the Camberwell Central Library, by kind invitation, on Wednesday evening, 15th April. The attendance was below the average, due probably to the proximity of the Easter holidays.

The members were received by Alderman A. H. Williams, Chairman of the Public Libraries' Committee, who presided over the tea and afterwards delivered a felicitous speech, in the course of which he referred to the work of the Camberwell Public Libraries. The members and friends then paid a visit of inspection to the Camberwell School of Arts and Crafts, and were conducted over the various departments by Mr. Dalton, the Curator. Especial interest was manifested in the book-binding department, where the members lingered for some time.

The business meeting was held in the Committee Room of the Central Library and the chair was occupied by Mr. W. G. Snowsill, the Librarian.

The following letter was received:—

" Town Hall, Camberwell, S.E.

" 15th April, 1908.

" Dear Mr. Snowsill,

" I regret that I shall be unable to be with you to-night at the Library, but trust that our visitors may be able to receive from Camberwell that warm welcome they deserve, and that the visit will result in good to the library movement.

" It must be borne in mind that in Camberwell, together with Deptford and Hackney, all library assistants will get compulsory superannuation when our unopposed Bill, now before Parliament, becomes law.

Yours very truly,

C. WILLIAM TAGG, Town Clerk."

This meeting having been appointed, by order of the L.A.A. Committee, a Special Meeting, Mr. W. G. Chambers moved the following addition to Rule 5:—

" (c) Not more than two members from the same library district shall hold seats on the Committee (this includes offices) at the same time. In the event of more than this number being elected, the seats shall be held by the two candidates obtaining the highest number of votes."

Mr. Chambers said that with the growth of membership of the Association and the establishment of new libraries it was desirable to spread out the members of the Committee as far as

possible. Committeemen instinctively acted as missionaries for the Association and in those library districts which had a representative on the Committee there was greater enthusiasm for the L.A.A.

Mr. Hogg seconded the motion and Mr. Stephen also spoke in its favour.

Mr. Thorne spoke against the motion. He considered it would be an unwise step to limit the number of members of Committee which should be returned from one library district; this should be left to the sanity of the electorate. The meeting was an unrepresentative one and he hoped the motion would not be carried.

Messrs. Stewart, Purnell and Sayers also spoke against the motion, which having been put to the members, there voted seven for and thirteen against; the Chairman therefore declared the motion lost.

Miss Olive E. Clarke (Islington) then read the paper entitled "Learning to Catalogue," which appears in this issue. This was followed by a paper from Mr. J. D. Young (Greenwich) on "Fugitive Bibliography in relation to Book Selection," which we hope to print in an early number.

Discussion.

Mr. Thorne congratulated Miss Clarke on the very able paper she had read. So far as he knew, the subject had not been dealt with before in the particular manner in which Miss Clarke had treated it. When printed, the paper would be an admirable aid to the younger members of the Association.

Mr. Stewart thought that the paper was a clear and admirable one, from which one could learn the rudiments of cataloguing. He would emphasise two points in it: (1) Assistants should first learn the code in use in their own library, because one code learned thoroughly would form a key to all other codes; (2) cataloguing work should be distributed amongst the staff. Regarding the latter point, he knew of one library where the librarian did all the work, from cataloguing to pasting down.

Mr. Coutts also emphasised the value of allowing junior assistants to help in the work of cataloguing. He would like to know if the books on Miss Clarke's list of aids were arranged in order of importance; if so, he did not consider the order was correct.

Mr. Sayers said that the question of the use of junior assistants in cataloguing had his sympathy, but in some libraries, where time was a consideration, the junior assistants might be more profitably engaged in other branches of library work. He

thought the tendency amongst the Islington staff was to discourage theory and to put practice on a pedestal.

Mr. Snowsill deemed it the duty of the librarian to teach his assistants how to catalogue. If assistants took part in the preparation of the catalogue the librarian would derive advantage as well as the assistants.

Mr. Hogg moved and Mr. Sayers seconded a hearty vote of thanks to the readers of the papers, and in so doing both gentlemen contributed to the discussion. Miss Clarke and Mr. Young having briefly replied,

Mr. Thorne moved that the best thanks of the meeting be accorded to Alderman Williams for presiding in the earlier part of the evening and for his appreciative address, to the Camberwell Libraries' Committee for permission to visit the Libraries, to Mr. Dalton, the Curator, for kindly conducting the party over the Technical Institute, and to Mr. W. G. Snowsill for taking the chair at the business meeting, and for the interest he had taken in arranging the meeting.

Mr. Coutts seconded the vote which was carried by acclamation.

SOUTH WALES BRANCH.

At a meeting held on April 1st at the Central Public Library, Cardiff, the members of the Branch had the pleasure of hearing a lecture by Mr. John Ballinger (the City Librarian), upon "What Paper is made from." The lecture was illustrated by an excellent series of lantern slides kindly loaned for the occasion by Mr. R. W. Sindall.

Mr. Ballinger opened the lecture by pointing out the importance, to librarians and prospective librarians, of the study of paper making materials if they wanted to hand on to their successors good sound books and not the wrecks of books. The great mass of paper, he continued, was to-day made from wood pulp prepared either by the "mechanical" or the "chemical" process. The ideal material was linen rag but owing to the scarcity of the supply of rags many other materials were utilised. The great deterioration in the durability of paper, which had taken place in the last twenty or thirty years, was due to the use of these inferior materials.

He roundly condemned the so-called "art papers," for the eye strain that they cause, for their lack of durability, and liability to damage through damp and rough handling. Many other interesting details with regard to the materials used and the process of paper-making were dealt with, and a most educative and interesting meeting was held.

Through the courtesy of the manager of the Ely Paper Mills specimens of pulp in the different stages were exhibited, and these enabled the actual process of paper-making to be roughly demonstrated.

The meeting closed with the passing of a vote of thanks to Mr. Ballinger for his most interesting lecture. In the near future arrangements will be made for a visit by the members of the Branch to the Ely Paper Mills. These mills are within a few miles of the Branch centre, and are among the largest in Great Britain.

IRISH BRANCH.

The monthly meeting of the Association of Assistant Librarians of Ireland was held at the Central Public Library, Belfast, on April 15th. Mr. R. J. Gourley acted as chairman.

Mr. T. Coulson (Hon. Secretary of the Branch), read a paper on "Biblioclasm." No attempt was made at a technical description of book destruction, but it was rather a collection of *obiter dicta* relating to the subject. Many interesting examples of mutilation of valuable works were given from the speaker's own experience.

Following this paper there was an interesting discussion of the question "Do we spend too much on Newsrooms?" The general tone of the speeches was conventional and little that was new was said. The chief feature was a vigorous attack on newsrooms by Mr. Coulson, with whom this is a favourite topic.

NORTH-EASTERN BRANCH.

A meeting of the Northumberland and Durham Association of Assistant Librarians was held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on Wednesday, April 15th, 1908. Besides a representative gathering of the members of that Association, a number of assistant librarians not identified with it attended in response to a circular proposing the formation of a North Eastern Branch of the Library Assistants' Association. Mr. D. W. Herdman, President of the N. and D. A. A. L. presided. Mr. Joseph Walton, sub-librarian, Newcastle, welcomed the assistants, and spoke with great acceptance on the ideals that he thought should be cherished by younger librarians. Mr. Walton was warmly thanked for his remarks. The paper by Messrs. Jast and Sayers on "The Registration of Librarians," was then read by Mr. Wilson, Gateshead, and after discussion the following resolution, moved by Mr. E. Pearson, seconded by Miss M. Forman, was carried unanimously:—"That this meeting of the Northumberland and Durham Association of Assistant

Librarians is of opinion that a professional register of librarians be established, and that the Library Association is the proper body to keep such a register."

By vote the existing Association was then dissolved and a resolution couched in the following terms was passed after a discussion characterised by animation and cordial approval:—

"That this meeting of the Northumberland and Durham Association of Assistant Librarians and of other assistant librarians in the north-eastern district are agreed upon the desirability of the formation of a North-Eastern Branch of the Library Assistants' Association, and that immediate steps be taken with that object."

Officers were then elected as under:—

Chairman: Mr. D. W. HERDMAN, Sunderland.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. W. H. GIBSON, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Hon. Treasurer: Mr. R. H. HOWE, Tynemouth.

Hon Secretary: Mr. T. E. TURNBULL, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Committee: *Senior Members*—Miss Forman, Messrs. Walton and Wilson. *Junior Members*—Miss Pringle, Mr. Pearson.

The formation of the Branch has been a source of the liveliest satisfaction to the Committee of the Association. Within the last few years the Library Assistants' Association has become a truly national association, and this new Branch will be a strong link in the chain which we hope will one day bind together all British and Colonial library assistants. We have now four Branches, in Wales, in Ireland, in Yorkshire and in the North-Eastern Counties. Later we hope to found a Scottish Branch, and to draw to ourselves the other existing associations and guilds of library assistants. Associations working as independent units have doubtless their local and personal advantages, and we wish them good fortune and success, but at any time when a decided professional movement is necessary, cohesion between them is wanting and they become far less effective than one centralised association with well-organised branches. These facts and the example of our North-Eastern brethren we commend to our friends in Scotland and elsewhere. That we have no Branch in Scotland—and that no general association of library assistants exists in that country of education—is one of the curious anomalies of the profession.

The Inaugural Meeting of the new Branch will be held at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on a date yet to be fixed, and Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers (Hon. Secretary of the L.A.A.), has been delegated by the Committee to represent the Association at that meeting.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

The *Local Government Officer* of the 18th April contains the following remarks on "Assistants and the Library Association," by "A Chief Librarian":—

"I should be extremely glad to know the reason why assistants are so often chosen to address the Library Association. I do not wish to be misunderstood. Some of the assistants who have read papers at the monthly meetings of the Association have experience and hold positions equal to those of many librarians. But the fact remains that, apparently, it is impossible to get the more experienced librarians to write and read papers in any numbers. The April meeting is to be addressed (by the time this is in print presumably it will have been addressed), by two assistants [Mr. G. A. Stephen and Mr. J. D. Stewart].

The reading of a paper before the Library Association by an assistant is not such a frequent occurrence as the above paragraph would suggest, though the present programme is a desirable innovation in this respect. It is pleasing to know that there is sufficient ability within the ranks of assistants to provide occasionally papers for monthly meetings, and that the L.A. is prepared to recognise it. In our opinion, the Library Association adopts a wise course when it invites not merely chief librarians but assistants and others interested in library work to contribute papers to its meetings. The writer of the paragraph infers that assistants with no experience have addressed the L.A. Who are they? Each of the three assistants who have recently addressed that body is an assistant of experience, holding an important position, and each has distinguished himself in the L.A. examinations. Moreover, each of these gentlemen is either a member or an associate of the L.A.

* * * * *

At the Library Association Meeting on March 9th, Mr. James Duff Brown made a suggestion which we believe will appeal to that large number of assistants who are amateur photographers. He suggested that the Library Association should form as complete a selection of lantern slide views of libraries, their exteriors and interiors as possible, in order that popular lectures on the working of the libraries might be given in various towns, which would effectively dissipate the presently held journalistic falsehood that libraries are indiscriminate circulators of inferior fiction. We hope many of our members will assist in this really useful work. Nearly all libraries have features which might be photographed and presented in lantern slide form. Such slides if deposited at the Library Association offices, 24, Whitcomb Street, W.C., would be available for the use of librarians and the Association could make them an asset in forwarding the public library movement.

* * * * *

It is hoped that the two gatherings in connection with the Association this month—the meeting at Twickenham on the 13th, and the Social at St. Bride Institute on the 27th—will be well supported. If the Social is to be a financial success there should be an attendance of not less than 100, and as the gathering will be open to all assistants and their friends, whether members of the Association or not, there should be no difficulty in getting this number. The price of tickets has been fixed at the lowest possible figure to bring them within the reach of all.

* * * * *

The process of establishing Branches in the larger towns, and of linking other bodies of assistants to the L.A.A. continues, and this month it is our pleasant duty to record the formation of a Branch in the north-eastern counties of England. A full report of the meeting at Newcastle-upon-Tyne,

at which the members of the Northumberland and Durham Association of Assistant Librarians resolved that their Association should become merged in the L.A.A., appears on another page. The N. and D. A.A.L. has been doing most useful work in an unostentatious way: as a Branch of the L.A.A. that capacity for usefulness will be considerably increased.

* * * * *

There will shortly be published by Messrs. Routledge and Sons a work entitled, "The First English Translations of the Great Foreign Classics: a Supplement to Text-books of English Literature," by Mr. William J. Harris, Borough Librarian, Bromley, Kent. The book is arranged in alphabetical order by authors' names, and will have a good index of works. It will be published in "The English Library" Series at 2s. 6d.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

THE LIBRARY. April, 1908. Published quarterly. Annual subscription, 10s. 6d. nett.

Contents: On certain False Dates in Shakespearian Quartos, by W. W. Greg; On Some Books and their Associations, by Austin Dobson; A Paris Bookseller of the Sixteenth Century—Galliot Du Pré, by Arthur Tilley (concluded); A Municipal Library and its Public. II.—Children, by John Ballinger; etc. Mr. Ballinger's article describes the method employed at Cardiff to provide for the reading of children.

THE BIBLIOPHILE. Vol. I., No. 1. March, 1908. Price 6d. nett.

The first number of a monthly illustrated magazine of literary criticism and bibliography. The principal contents are: W. E. Henley, Poet, by G. K. Chesterton; Finely Illustrated Books, by Mrs. Arthur Bell; Prints and how to collect them, by Arthur Hayden; Early Book Advertisements, by A. W. Pollard; History in Book-Plates, by Dr. George C. Peachey. The magazine is well produced and illustrated, and remarkably cheap. It should have a large circulation.

LIBRARY PUBLICATIONS.

CARNEGIE LIBRARY OF PITTSBURGH: Classified Catalogue, 1902-1906. Part I.—General Works, Philosophy, Religion, Sociology, Philology 1907. Part II.—Natural Science, Useful Arts, Fine Arts. 1907. Catalogue of books annotated and arranged, and provided by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh for the use of the first eight grades in the Pittsburgh Schools, 1907.

From Brooklyn we have received a Catalogue of German Books in the Brooklyn Public Library. The catalogue is in two parts, author and subject.

Reports are to hand from Brighton, Kendal, and Saffron Walden Literary and Scientific Institution, and Magazines from Croydon, Finsbury, Manchester, Walthamstow, Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, Pratt Institute (New York), and Wisconsin Library Commission.

NEW MEMBERS.

Senior: A. G. Craft, Kensal Rise; Miss Grace Richards, Cathays Branch, Cardiff.

Junior: W. D. Stewart, Croydon.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION.

Last month we inserted a paragraph relating to the professional examination which was sent to us for publication by Dr. Baker, Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee of the L.A., in which it was stated that "A proportion of marks has been determined upon as the minimum for a pass, and the candidate must obtain half that number in each paper." Dr. Baker now writes to correct this statement, and informs us that although "a proportion of marks has been determined upon as the minimum for a pass in each paper, the proportion is really forty per cent., not fifty per cent. of the possible marks in that paper." He further states that "an aggregate of at least fifty per cent. of the possible marks is required on both papers taken together, for a pass; but candidates must be careful not to neglect any side of their chosen subject in the hope of scoring heavily on the other."

We have reason to know that the paragraph has caused uneasiness amongst many candidates, and we are therefore glad to have Dr. Baker's correction to his first note.

APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. J. RADCLIFFE, Sub-Librarian, East Ham, to be Librarian, Ilford.

The other selected candidates were Messrs. *Cogswell (Wandsworth), *Cousins (Wandsworth), Hale (Lewisham), McCall (Stepney), McDougal (West Ham), *Rivers (Hampstead), *Sureties (Hornsey), *Thorne (Poplar), and Weare (Stepney). The final selection consisted of Messrs. McCall, Radcliffe and *Thorne.

Mr. G. M. HOBBISS, Third Assistant, Southend-on-Sea, to be Second Assistant.

*Member of the L.A.A.

APPOINTMENTS WANTED.

ASSISTANT desires change. Age nearly 19. Knowledge of typewriting. Commencing salary £55 per annum. Address "W. E. K.," c/o the Editor.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE.

The Hon. Secretary is prepared to receive nominations for Officers and Committee for the ensuing year. The Officers consist of Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer, and the Committee is composed of ten London and ten provincial members. Nominations must be sent to Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Central Library, Town Hall, Croydon, not later than May 15th, Ballot papers will accompany the June number of "The Library Assistant."

ADDRESSES.

Chairman.—Mr. W. Benson Thorne, Bromley Library, Poplar, E.

Hon. Treasurer.—Mr. W. Geo. Chambers, Public Library, Plumstead: (Tel. 45 Woolwich.)

Hon. Librarian.—Mr. A. H. Carter, Public Library, 110, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

Hon. Secretary.—Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Central Library, Town Hall, Croydon. (Tel. 239 Croydon.)

All communications relating to this journal should be addressed to the Hon. Editor, Mr. HUGH SMITH, Bishopsgate Institute, London, E.C.